PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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Keeping Families Strong **September 2004**

The Fallout: When a Spouse Comes Out

By Karen Breslau and Debra Rosenberg, Aug 23 *Newsweek*

As Cathy Morton watched Gov. James McGreevey's televised confession last week, she felt drawn to his wife, Dina, who stood at his side with a pained half smile frozen on her face. "I've been there," says Morton, who says she discovered her husband cruising gay websites five years ago. "She may not feel lucky now," says Morton, who is now divorcing, but at least he admitted the truth and took responsibility. That's something."

Few women have to endure the disclosure at a news conference, but Dina Matos McGreevey is hardly alone. Nationwide there are nearly 2 million "straight spouses," whose husbands and wives have come our of the closet, often after decades of marriage, says Amity Pierce Buxton of PFLAG's Straight Spouse Network, whose book "The Other Side of the Closet" examines the phenomenon. In

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SEPTEMBER
PFLAG MEETING

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 21
7:00 p.m.

THE DWELLING PLACE
508 NORTH TEJON
STREET

Membership Renewal
It's time to renew your PFLAG membership! Our membership year runs from Oct 1—September 30. Your support is vital to our chapter's ongoing work—publication and mailing of the newsletter, monthly meetings, maintenance of a book/video library, special events and support of the gay community. Please renew soon!

PFLAG National Conference Updates

A Message From Ron Schlittler, Interim Executive Director

We received some great news this week! Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon will be joining us in Salt Lake City at the PFLAG national conference! The couple who, after 51 years together playing a legendary role in the early GLBT movement in the US, were the first same-sex couple to wed in San Francisco.

We are thrilled to have these remarkable women - who don't opt to travel much anymore - honor PFLAG by agreeing to

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Fabulous Opening Night at Lavender Film Festival

On September 17th, beginning at 6:30 p. m., members and friends of LGBT community will gather for a reception and program at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center for the Opening Night of the 5th Annual Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival. You will be pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the audience and films at this great event that brings our community together.

Former mayor and now director of the Gay and Lesbian Fund, Mary Lou Makepeace will welcome our audience.

Opening Night this year promises wonderful films--a short from Spain called *Circular Loves* and a charming Irish feature film, *Goldfish Memory* with a large ensemble cast of many characters with varying sexual orientations. This is the story of people learning what makes them happy. The film is a series of simple tales that create a tangled web that shows us how complex being happy can be. Best of all, the whole film concludes so neatly that when you leave the theater you will feel all is right with the world.

We marvel at the advances that LGBT people have made over the short life of this festival. In just five years, gay and lesbian marriage has moved to center stage. We'll be screening an award-winning

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This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

PFLAG Mission Statement:

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) persons, their families and friends through:

√ **support**, to cope with an adverse society,

√ **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and

√ **advocacy**, to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

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To join the chapter and receive the newsletter regularly, complete and mail the membership form on page four. To receive complimentary copies of the newsletter, or if you have information to be included in the newsletter, comments or suggestions, please call Karen Flitton at 634-4433.

The next newsletter deadline is September 26, 2004.

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E-mail us at CSPFLAG@aol.com

PFLAG National Office website: http://www.pflag.org

PFLAG Conference Update (cont.)

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come. They will participate in the pre- conference evening event on Thursday, October 21, then join another iconic figure from the early days of the GLBT movement, Frank Kameny. In a long- standing Utah tradition, these trailblazers will receive a "Pioneer Award" the first night of the conference.

Message from Sara Winter, Denver PFLAG Chapter

Maybe you've already registered for the conference. Maybe it's absolutely impossible for you to go this year. But if you're still trying to decide whether to attend the PFLAG National Conference next month, we strongly encourage you to do so!

For a registration fee (before Sept. 15) of $275 and very reasonable transportation and accommodation costs, you can join a lively bunch of like-minded Colorado PFLAGers on a chartered bus trip to beautiful Salt Lake City, a stay at the popular Little America Hotel, and an enthusiastic and inspirational three-day conference on issues dear to our hearts.

Preparations are in full swing for this important PFLAG event, October 22-24. There will be workshops on strengthening chapters, school and youth issues, marriage equality, coalition-building. Other key topics include updates on the radical right, transgender and intersex issues, hate crimes, safe schools and much more.

For those getting there early, there will also be a pre-conference rally in opposition to Utah's proposed amendment to the state Constitution. This is scheduled for October 21 and is to be followed by a special concert hosted by Kate Clinton.

If there is sufficient interest, Denver PFLAG plans to charter a bus from Denver to Salt Lake City. The cost will depend on the number of people signing up. For more information, contact the Denver office at (303) 573-5861.

Colorado Springs PFLAG is proud to be a sponsor of this year's Lavender Film Festival

Film Festival (cont.)

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documentary, *Tying the Knot* which will bring you up-to-date on the marriage issue on Sunday, September 19th at 5:00 p.m.

Please join the audience of this wonderful film festival right here in Colorado Springs and help support the continuation of this event. You'll have a great time. For a look at our entire festival program: www.pplff.org or call 719-38-MOVIE. See you Opening Night, September 17th at the Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival.

- Alma Cremonesi
Founder/Coordinator

"Tying the Knot" Film Festival Screens PFLAG-Supported Documentary

The Lavender Film Festival in Colorado Springs will screen *Tying the Knot* on Sept. 19th.

National PFLAG released the following message in August:

"PFLAG is thrilled to partner with an award-winning filmmaker and PFLAG friend Jim DeSeve in announcing the release of his marriage equality documentary, *Tying the Knot*. This incredibly moving film has played to rave reviews and accolades in festivals across the country, including the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City and the Frameline Festival in San Francisco."

The gay marriage documentary was screened for delegates at the Republican National Convention. Distributor Roadside Attractions teamed with former New York City mayor Ed Koch, chairman of the RNC's volunteer committee, as well as gay rights groups such as PFLAG and Marriage Equality in an attempt to recruit delegates for the screening on August 31.

The documentary focuses on two surviving partners who had to fight for pensions and property because their longtime relationships lacked the legal protections of marriage.

Tying the Knot will open October 1 in selected markets. For more information, visit the film's website at www.1049films.com

Always Remember
To keep our PFLAG meetings and conversations —
CONFIDENTIAL

Inside/Out Youth Services

Inside/Out will sponsor its second annual Fall Fat Tire Bike Ride from Cripple Creek to Colorado Springs on Saturday, October 2. Participants ride down the old Gold Camp Road, an unpaved road that is closed to vehicular traffic for the last six miles as it approaches Colorado Springs.

This event is a benefit for Inside/Out and a great way to get out into the mountains and enjoy the fall colors. Riders are encouraged to sign up early. Volunteers are needed , too. It's a great way to spend a Saturday in October. If you can help, call Karen at 634-4433.

Inside/Out has scheduled its 3rd Annual Awards Dinner for Saturday night, October 16th, at Bemis Hall, Colorado College. Tickets are $45 before October 1 and $55 after that date. A portion of the ticket price is tax-deductible. Tickets may be purchased online (www.insideoutys.org) or by contacting Tasha at Inside/Out 328-1056.

Remember: You can also support Inside/Out by purchasing King Soopers gift certificates at PFLAG meetings.

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Inside/Out is a 501(c)(3) Colorado nonprofit organization that provides a meeting space and recreational activities for GLBTQ youth in Colorado Springs.

PFLAG Condemns Collapse of Equality in California

August 12, 2004 - PFLAG condemned the collapse of equality in California today, as the California Supreme Court invalidated thousands of marriages. The court ruled against San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsome and stripped 4,037 families of the legal protections of marriage.

"The Constitution of California clearly outlaws all forms of discrimination; denying these couples, some of whom have spent their entire lives together, the rights and protections of other married couples flies in the face of the freedom and equality we expect as Americans," said PFLAG's Executive Director Ron Schlittler.

Louise Browning, PFLAG mom of two gay sons who married their partners in San Francisco, was heartbroken and angry at the news. "My sons waited years to be married. They committed their lives to their partners and only wanted to be legally married and claim that commitment in front of their family, friends and community. To revoke their marriages now is a heinous miscarriage of justice."

"The fact is," said Alice Leeds, PFLAG's Communications Director, "California's marriage laws, which define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, are an unconstitutional abridgment of the civil rights of gays and lesbians. It is a sad day for all the wonderful couples in San Francisco, but we know this is not the end. The future lies in fairness for gay and lesbian families."

BULLETIN BOARD

September 17-19—5th Lavender Film Festival, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center

September 21—PFLAG Monthly Meeting— 7:00 p.m.

October 2—Fall Fat Tire Ride to benefit Inside Out Youth Services—Ride from Cripple Creek to Colorado Springs along the Old Gold Camp Road. For more information call 328-1056

October 11—National Coming Out Day

October 16—Inside/Out Youth Services Presents "A Family Affair" 3rd Annual Awards Dinner at Bemis Hall, Colorado College. For more information call 328-1056.

October 21-24—PFLAG National Conference, Salt Lake City

November 12-14—Rocky Mountain Women's Film Festival— for more information call 226-0450 or go to rmwfilmfest.org

The Fallout: When a Spouse Comes Out (cont.)

most cases, says Buxton, wives or husbands are stunned by the revelation; in about a third, wives or husbands have an inkling that their partner is struggling, but "don't want to face the elephant in the room."

The wave of midlife coming-out crises is explained in large part by growing social acceptance. Gay's and lesbians of McGreevey's generation were more likely to conform to the social pressure to marry—especially if they wanted children– than are young homosexuals today. As they approach middle age and watch their kids leave for college, many no longer see a reason to remain in their heterosexual marriages.

But while those coming our can find acceptance, even celebration, in their newfound identities, the partners and children left behind are often devastated. "The gay community is portrayed as courageous, but no one shows the families who are left to pick up the pieces," says Flo Kubes, whose wife left him for a woman in their congregation after 20 years of marriage.

Kubes, a pastor in a conservative community in Minnesota, lost his job, he says, as a result (church elders felt the scandal was too distracting). The couple's teenage son was hospitalized for depression. Kubes says be struggled for months to find emotional help before joining Buxton's online support group, the Straight Spouse Network (www.ssnetwrk.org).

Many wives of gay husbands are terrified that they've been exposed to AIDS. Kathy Rockel, whose husband came out to her shortly before his 50th birthday, says she dreaded telling a clinic worker in her small Colorado town why she needed an AIDS test. (Both spouses tested negative).

"Come Out, Speak Out, Vote!"

Project Calls on Friends and Family to Act for Fairness

"Come Out, Speak Out, Vote!" is the theme for this year's National Coming Out Day—encouraging gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans to talk to their families and friends about their lives, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation announced today.

"This year, we need more than 'I'm gay and it's OK.' We need our families and friends to say 'It's not OK to use gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues as a wedge,'" said Cheryl Jacques, president of HRC. "We must talk to and involve our families and friends. Their voices are some of the strongest in the fight for equality."

National Coming Out Day is October 11th. For more information, see www.hrc.org